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[USSR-Czechoslovakia: (Information as of 2300 EDT)]

The stalemate between Soviet tanks and Czechoslovak political forces loyal to the Dubcek regime went into its third day.

The overwhelming military forces of the Soviets and their allies remained in control of all the essential cities and the key buildings of Prague. A Soviet-imposed curfew during the night appears to have kept the citizenry, which had thronged the streets of Prague during the day, at home.

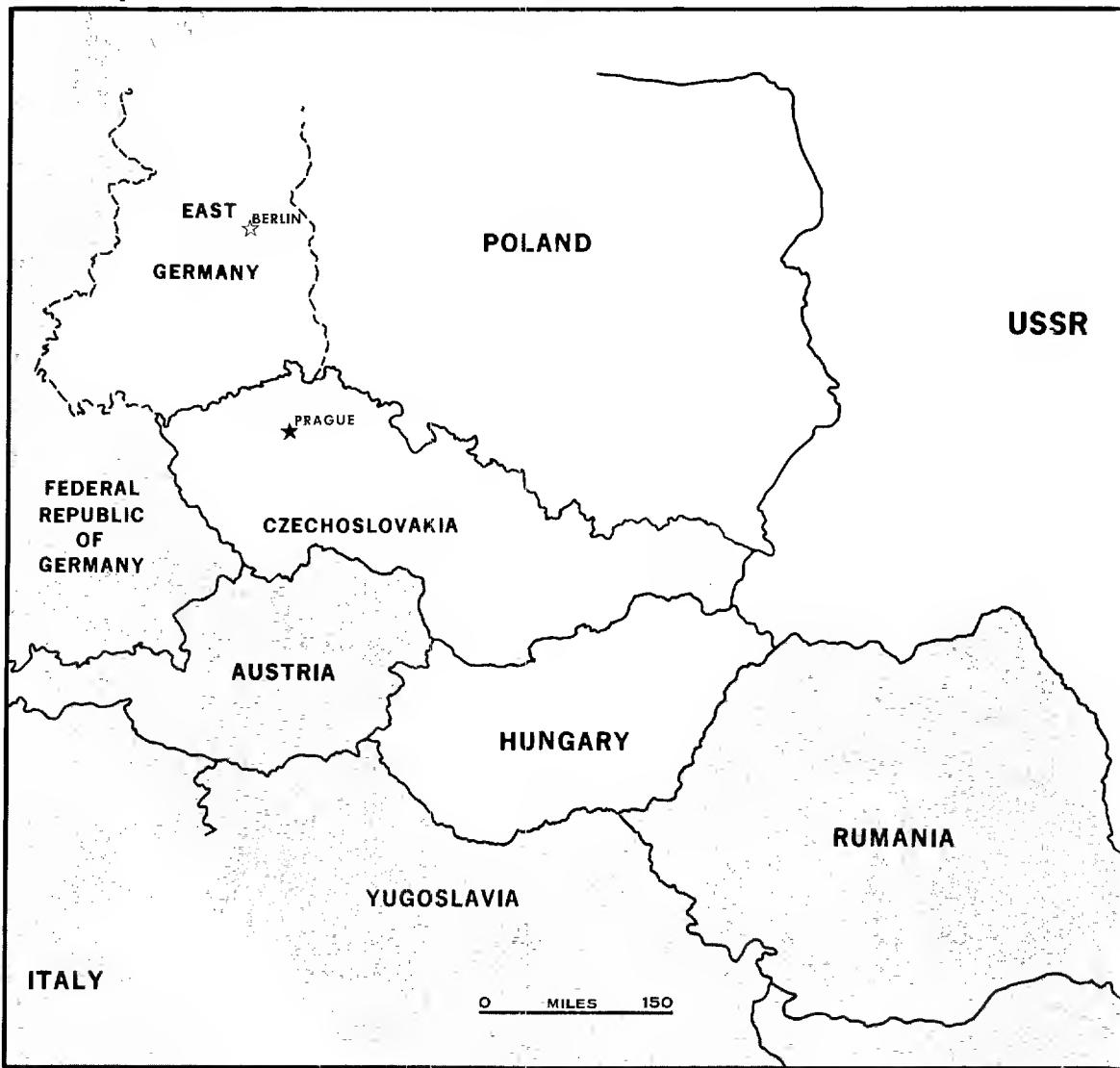
There were continuing reports of sporadic gunfire, but casualties on both sides thus far appear to be very light. There were also tenuous indications that Soviet troops have been ordered to leave areas where Czechoslovak troops are stationed, evacuate small towns, and move to parks and open spaces in the larger towns. These moves may be intended to minimize the possibility of clashes with the populace.

Operating through a series of mobile radio stations and mimeographed newspapers, political forces loyal to Dubcek have publicized statements attributed to the Czechoslovak leaders who are now under Soviet detention. Among these was a declaration by more than two thirds of the party congress which threatened a general strike unless the Soviets agreed within 24 hours to negotiate the withdrawal of Soviet troops and release Dubcek and his associates. Similar statements were issued in the name of the Czechoslovak Government and the National Assembly. The party congress also announced the election of a new central committee with Dubcek, Cernik, and Svoboda as the first men named.

Probably the most dramatic demonstration of Czechoslovak resolve to stand up to the Soviets has been Moscow's inability to form a new and "trustworthy" government. Four or five conservative]

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Military Intervention in Czechoslovakia



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Movement of Soviet and East European Forces

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[members of the Czechoslovak presidium, who presumably could form the nucleus of a new government, reportedly have held meetings at the Soviet Embassy. Moscow has not seen fit to back them openly, however, and the continuing mass support for the Dubcek leadership suggests that the Soviets realize that a narrowly based occupation regime imposed on the Czechoslovak people would provoke active resistance.

Soviet propaganda has continued to rationalize the intervention and Moscow continues to jam Western radiobroadcasts describing events in Czechoslovakia. None of the Soviet leaders has appeared in public since the intervention, however, and "man-in-the-street" reaction in Moscow has been mostly puzzled or incredulous rather than excited. [Map)]

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C South Vietnam: The Communists have made a major effort to sustain the pace of their offensive phase during the past 24 hours, amid more indications that they would like to broaden and increase the tempo, if possible.

At least 12 significant ground contacts and 15 attacks by fire were reported in the III Corps area, mostly in the northern sector. In the delta provinces, heavy fighting took place in Phong Dinh and in the immediate vicinity of the provincial capitals of Rach Gia and Soc Trang. The ground contacts were accompanied by a new flurry of mortar assaults against urban areas and military facilities.

Along the north-central coast, enemy forces continued to maneuver into positions suitable for attacks in and around Da Nang, Chu Lai, and Quang Ngai city. The advanced stage of attack preparations was indicated by the rash of harassing mortar assaults and sabotage actions against secondary targets in the sector, and a rocket attack against the US air base at Da Nang. The air base at Pleiku also came under rocket fire.

No significant troop movements into the Saigon area have been reported, but the rocket attack on the city on the 22nd apparently signals an intent to renew heavy military pressure on this key urban area.

The enemy actions have so far been marked by a greater caution in expending troops and achieving the proper combat posture than was the case in the first- and second-phase rounds of the general offensive at Tet and in early May. This would suggest that the Communists are probably not as optimistic as in past months over the probable impact on the allies of their military action, and that they wish to preserve more of their capability for sustaining and renewing the pressure at a later date, if necessary. **D**

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There is more evidence of increased political stability within the Huong government. The prime minister indicated on 21 August that he had managed to damp down the personality friction within his cabinet and thus had put aside plans to reshuffle the leadership in some of the ministries. Although other factors are probably involved in Huong's decision, it is seemingly indicative of a growing unity of view and cohesion within the cabinet.

In an effort to cope with potential postwar conditions, the cabinet has meanwhile voted to develop a program to counter enemy political activity following a cease-fire or other scaling down of hostilities. The program will involve the use of existing revolutionary development and popular forces assets to reinforce and maintain the government's political presence in the countryside. Although the cabinet may be overestimating the government's political capacity for coping with the Communists in a cease-fire situation, the fact that it is giving some thought to the problem is another indication of its steady improvement in performance.

[(Map)]

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Malaysia: The Communists apparently have made some gains among the large Iban non-Muslim tribal group in Sarawak.

[redacted] the predominantly Chinese Sarawak Communist organization has managed during the past two years to gain a firm foothold among disaffected Iban tribesmen in the Second Division of western Sarawak. The Communists have appealed to their traditional antigovernment and anti-Muslim Malay feelings.

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Despite indications of inroads among the Ibans, the Sarawak Communists continue to be hampered by aggressive Malaysian security actions and Indonesian military operations against Communist guerrillas located across the border in West Kalimantan. A recent Malaysian security sweep in western Sarawak picked up ten Iban leaders, including five chiefs, for supplying food and information to armed Communist groups.

Any precipitate action against Ibans suspected of Communist affiliation could, however, have adverse political implications among the tribes which make up half the population of the state. [redacted]

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India: Another state government in northern India has collapsed, and direct rule from New Delhi is imminent.

The chief minister of the Punjab's shaky non-Congress minority government has resigned following a Congress Party decision to withdraw its crucial support. The long-pending decision to cease backing the Punjab regime ends a Congress Party experiment, which became a divisive issue within the local party unit and weakened popular support for the party in the state.

New Delhi almost certainly will soon impose direct rule on the Punjab and probably will dissolve the state assembly so that new elections can be held. The appointed state governor has formally advised President Husain that there is no alternative, and the national Congress Party leadership, overruling party leaders in the Punjab, has announced that no attempt will be made to form a Congress ministry.

The Punjab will be the fourth state in populous northern India currently to be under direct rule, and the sixth in which representative government has had to be suspended since the general election in February 1967. New elections have already been held in Haryana, and others are scheduled for turbulent West Bengal in November and for Uttar Pradesh and Bihar in February 1969.

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Turkey-US: Segments of the anti-US press in Turkey have begun criticizing the US Navy courtesy visit to Izmir scheduled for 29 August - 9 September. US and Turkish officials have already met to work out plans for preventing the occurrence of attacks such as were made on US Navy personnel by leftist rioters in Istanbul during a July visit. Despite some apparent lack of coordination among Turkish authorities, they appear determined to maintain order. Their task could be complicated by the crowds of outsiders attending the Izmir International Trade Fair during the period of the visit. [redacted]

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Greece: The Revolutionary Council has named General Angelis, the competent chief of the National Defense General Staff and a staunch nationalist, to succeed Papadopoulos as prime minister if he should become incapacitated or die while in office. This action was taken immediately after the assassination attempt early last week against Papadopoulos. The line of succession was probably established to prevent extremist elements within the junta from taking over the government during any period of uncertain leadership.

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Congo (Kinshasa): The recent cabinet shuffle is primarily a move toward increased efficiency and seems to have little political significance. The appointment of Mobutu's close adviser and an able administrator, Victor Nendaka, to the Finance Ministry suggests that Mobutu intends to straighten out the Congo's economic problems. Although some complaints can be expected--especially from those groups whose representatives were demoted--most Congolese politicians should be pleased with the changes.

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